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Allington Pippin (#37724)

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Subject: "Now to store your canned garden." Information from the War Food Administration.

Already many families are enjoying plenty of crisp, tender vegetables out of their Victory gardens. Now too they're making provision to store the surplus they can't eat fresh. Of course, they will can some of the Victory vegetables. They'll dry some, salt or brine a few, and maybe they will have some frozen and kept in a nearby freezer-locker. They will want to store most of the mature root crops either outdoors in banks or in buried barrels or in pits, or in a special ventilated storage room in the basement.

Several housewives have asked for tips on planning the family storage pantry, the basement storeroom and other convenient storage spaces. Many of these women intend to keep their canned food in the general storeroom. They want to know how to arrange the space in the storeroom, what to keep there, and what they should do right now to prepare for proper storage of all their various food products.

Mrs. Ola Powell Malcolm of the Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture points out that most homes have at least two kinds of storage to plan for—canned and dried foods packed in tightly sealed containers, and loose mature vegetables and fruits. If your storeroom is a combination place for both camed foods and loose root vegetables it probably has shelves on one side and bins or boxes on the other. Lot's talk about storing the sealed containers first, Mrs. Malcolm suggests.

Begin now to look over all the shelves you have to see if any of them need bracing or strengthening before you load with the extra weight of this

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season's home-processed food supply. Be sure the side supports are strong enough to hold the shelves up when they are well filled. Perhaps you need to get someone to brace the shelves in the middle and help you to provide for ample ventilation or circulation of air. You want to keep your foods safe from spoilage and also preserve their quality.

Another thing: See that your wall space is used to the best advantage. That is, if the shelves are placed close enough together. Farm women used to put up large quantities of vegetables "salted down" in big eartherware crocks and in half gallon jars. These took up a lot of space between the shelves. This year you may salt a few vegetables but you are likely to have a larger number of pint and quart jars of canned foods. Some of those far-apart shelves could be set closer together and make room for more jars on the same wall space.

Some homemakers like the idea of adjustable shelves. They have the ends of the shelves rest on mailed cleats and have these cleats spaced several inches apart. Then if they find they have more small jars than large one; they can put shelves closer together and perhaps gain a shelf or two in doing so.

Here's another idea Mrs. Malcolm suggests: Instead of putting the canne foods in the same general storeroom with mature root vegetables, she prefers planning for separate storage, following plans used in a great many farm home Several State Extension Services furnish plans for constructing a ventilated pantry for storing canned foods. Sometimes the walls of this pantry are insulated to help maintain cooler and more even temperatures than it is possible to maintion in an ordinary storeroom.

It is better to build a food storage pantry like this in the center of the house or away from outside walls. Such a pantry must have ample ventilation both bottom and top. But don't connect the pantry directly with the out

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side air by a flue. It is better to open the pantry ceiling directly into a well-ventilated attic.

Make all the shelves of the pantry of slats so the air can circulate up through it. Free circulation of air is a help in controlling the humidity or moisture content of the air. The slats don't have to be narrow. Three—or four—inch boards spaced with one inch between them will make very satisfacto—ry slat shelves. You could have these shelves on three sides of a ventilated pantry without a window, and with a tight—fitting door. There must be ventilating openings in the floor under the slat shelves as well as in the coiling In such a ventilated pantry you can place the shelves from a point near the floor almost to the ceiling. The tighter and better insulated the walls, the more even the temperature will be within the pantry. Group the same kinds of foods together as grocers do in stores.

When you place containers in the pantry, don't obstruct the free circulation of air by having the jars too close together over the space between the slats. Put in a drop light or wall light to use when you want to put jars away or take them out.

So much for this special kind of canned foods pantry. If you decide to put canned foods in your main storeroom that is located against the outside wall of an unheated basement, you will need to protect both the canned fruits and the stored vegetables from freezing by insulating all the walls thoroughly. A corner storeroom in the cellar generally has at least one window, which is useful for ventilation on mild days, but as the vegetables and the canned foods both need protection from light, put an opaque shade on the window.

If your basement is heated it may be a poor place for proper storage of either your canned foods or root crops, and it may pay you to plan other way of storing them. In a few days we'll talk about some of the things you may need to do now in storing good vegetables.

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